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The Hanging  
of the  
Parton's Son  
And Other Crimes



BY  
SAM L. LONG

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The Hanging  
of the  
Parson's Son  
And Other Crimes

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BY  
SOL. L. LONG  
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BY

SOL L. LONG.

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## Preface.

To those who would criticise any of the sentiments herein, as being wanting in reverence, I would say: That I am not half so much concerned in the "God of our Fathers," as I am in the sort of a God our children are to have.

"Him who hath an ear, let him hear;"

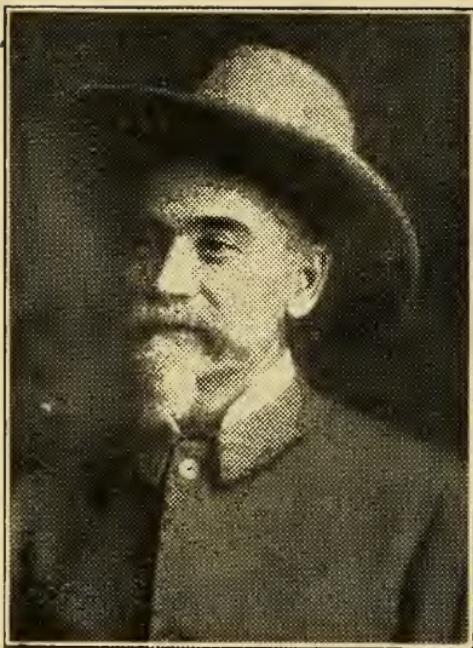
SOL. L. LONG.

Kansas City, Mo.

May, 1916.

2120 Troost Avenue.

NOTE—If at any time in the future this book, or any part of it, be deemed of value and some picnickty stickler for trifles—some purblind mouser for small things—find a few "solecisms," or some punctuating that violates rules, made by those who were unable to even so much as write anything to be punctuated, let me say to such; that punctuation is an inspiration—not a science; and "solecisms" were invented for the sole and separate purpose of giving old maid schoolmarms, and adolescent youths, the thrill of improving the writings of genius—the glorious opportunity of informing the shades of the departed Masters and Formers of the language just how "she should be writ." To paraphrase Shakespeare—not Bacon—cursed be he who changes any of these in ever, so little as a comma.



### Dedication.

I dedicate this book to myself; for the main reason, to-wit:

Because I refuse to follow the smug, conventional, beaten ways, in even so far, and little, as the dedication of a book.

And for the following subsidiary reasons, namely:

Because it is a part of me.

Because I have felt—suffered—known better than another—the things herein set down.

Because I am the only one who does, can, or shall, fully understand and, therefore, the only one to whom, of right, the book could be dedicated.

Because all herein contained is the product of lonely hours, when no one set by me—and this would be sufficient reason for my seeming egoism in dedicating it to myself—alone.

SOL. L. LONG.

## The Hanging of the Parson's Son.

They have taken the Parson's son outside;  
There's a hush in the dawn's crisp air;  
And he looks on the gallows, as on a bride,  
    And a wayward wisp of hair  
He tosses back, from his unplowed brow;  
    And he draws no quivering breath;  
Although he knows, full well, that now  
    He is face to face with death.

And a Parson, called from a pile of stone,  
    On whose steps a wanderer froze,  
Begins, in the form approved, to drone  
    The printed prayers he knows.  
"No prayers for me! No intoned name!  
    You have let me come thus far  
Alone, and hither I'll go the same;  
    Be it to pit, or star."

The Parson stands aghast and shocked;  
    For his book-fed soul can see  
Naught in the words but Mercy mocked  
    By the tongue of blasphemy.  
"Have you no thought of your soul," said he,  
    "Nor fear of the wrath to come;  
That you stand on the brink of Eternity  
    Repentant not, nor dumb?"

Evenly answered the Parson's son:  
    "I was schooled in the creed ye hold.  
For it my father gave up the sun  
    And labored, 'till he was old,  
In a dim lit room, with books begirt,  
    And damp, with a musty smell;  
Accounting the laughter of life as dirt;  
    That he might escape its hell."

One day he died and the Bishop came  
    And, in solemn tone and slow,  
Paid tribute unto my father's name;  
    And, of marble, white as snow,  
The parish raised a monument  
    And 'graved thereon his deeds;  
Accounting the cost as righteously spent—  
    But forgot his loved one's needs."

“And another took my father’s place  
And the form of your creed came in  
As the force that whitened my mother’s face  
And crowded me into sin.  
For the body must live; though the soul should die;  
And I had never been taught  
That creeds were an asset in commerce, or I  
Might have fought as you have fought.”

“So, I watched my mother’s eyes grow dim,  
And her hands become un-nerved,  
In a tenement, owned by the Church of Him  
Whom, at least, my father served.  
And a vestryman of that church took toll  
Of my mother’s needle, and I  
Became a rebel, in body and soul,  
As I watched her, slowly, die.”

“No Bishop came, when her life was done,  
And I had to steal a flower,  
From a walled-in churchyard, to lay upon  
Her breast, at the parting hour.  
No shaft was raised above her dust;  
Yet, she died my father’s wife—  
And if God lives he must needs be just  
And He knew them both—in life.”

“She slipped her cable upon the faith  
In which she was born and reared;  
And this, the commentators saith,  
Is a thing much to be feared.  
But howsoever this may be;  
Whether it be truth, or lie,  
Her destiny will be heaven for me—  
As she died I will die.”

“So, save your sighs and save your tears,  
For the coward souls, and lame,  
Who foolishly, witlessly, through the years  
Are awed by a sound—a name.  
The ones who, though the dead arise,  
To action could not wake—  
The ones who see through other’s eyes—  
Act for another’s sake.”

“I would not whine and I would not fawn;  
E’en to escape the tree  
That looms upon me out of the dawn;  
And if, in Eternity,

There sits a Judge, I shall let Him say  
How much of my sin is me,  
And how much belongs to the ones who pray;  
But neither hear, nor see."

They have hanged him outside the prison door;  
And they know not what they have done;  
For never gallows of earth yet bore,  
Nor ever shall, only one.

They will take one only from the tree  
And lay it beneath the sod;  
But a thousand, whom they cannot see,  
Are seen by the eyes of God. .

---

### The Men Who Don't Fit In.

"There's a race of men that don't fit in,  
A race that can't stay still;  
So they break the hearts of kith and kin,  
And they roam the world at will.  
They range the field and they rove the flood,  
And they climb the mountain's crest;  
There's is the curse of the gypsy blood,  
And they don't know how to rest."

—Robert W. Service.

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If heart of "kith and kin" e're broke,  
'Twas not for us. Parfay;  
'Twas at the strain of pampered pride;  
That blood of their's should stray.  
The tamed lands teem with broken hearts,  
Which burst of selfishness;  
But none are found along the Road  
Through God's grand Wilderness.

We know where luring sky lines are,  
Unscreened by smoke or towers;  
The amber flooded mountain crests  
And dreamy vales, are ours.  
The peace we know is fathomless;  
Because unmarred by crowds;  
Ours is the canvas of the dawn,  
The sculpture of the clouds.

The gilded hutches of the great;  
Wherein they lie and rust;  
Until the ichor in their veins

Is curdled by distrust;  
No matter what their fashionings,  
On every entrance door  
Is mirrored, for the eyes that see,  
The warrens of the poor.

Life, love, and laughter, jest, and joy,  
Are unstaled and the same  
As ever; though enigmas grown  
To shackled souls, and fame.  
And for that we have farther seen,  
And larger grown as well,  
The fools who loose and bind with words  
Consign us to their hell.

'Tis not the "gypsy curse"—forsooth,  
'Tis God's own primal urge  
Held back by form—earth's princes are  
Glad victims to its surge;  
Therefore they flee the roof-tree-bright,  
And spurn the custom laved;  
Accounting as great honor the  
Tabu of book-behaved.

We "know not how to rest"—in truth,  
'Twere despite to our code  
To teach us how and bar us from  
The unrest of the Road.  
The sky is ours; the trail is ours;  
But never ours the sin  
Of the smug, complaisant hypocrites—  
The men who do fit in.

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### Jikiri.

Jikiri, Moro chief, is dead;  
From out his mountain cave  
He sallied, with his outlaw band,  
And found—a nameless grave!  
Resourceful, valiant chief was he;  
Bold, crafty, yet serene;  
Untiring, vengeful, dangerous,  
And given to rapine.

For ten long years he marched and fought;  
A decade gathered scars;

He suffered for the light he had;  
He bivouacked 'neath the stars.  
And for what had he marched and fought?  
For what left home and all?  
For spoils? There was more gold for him,  
Behind Manila's wall!

Behind him, stretching from the dawn,  
His island ancestry  
Had passed, from father unto son,  
Unquestioned right and free.  
He loved his little sea-girt isle;  
'Twas all the world he knew—  
'Twas fatherland, as dear to him  
As your land is to you.

For, whether man's strange mind be filled  
With shadows, glimmering-gray,  
Of paganism, or the wild.  
Flushed fancies of our day,  
Love only speaks one simple tongue;  
Has one truth in her train;  
Proceedeth from Eternity  
And journeys back again.

And love's dream-led alumni learn  
Truths held by no man's school;  
Truths none may fully comprehend,  
Much less, reduce to rule.  
In outer, vagrant, vastness where  
The dawn tints rise, upcurled,  
Their Alma Mater rests, serene,  
Outside, above, the world.

And so this dreaded Moro chief—  
This terror of the night,  
Loved home and forebears sepulchres—  
God! had he not the right?  
The heartbeats of his tribe he knew;  
He knew his native land;  
But "destiny," "benevolence,"  
He could not understand.

That sea nursed island was his home;  
Its lotus air, his air;  
The lips that crooned his lullabies  
Had learned their cadence there.

There had his wondering, infant, eyes  
First looked on land and sea;  
There, to a daughter of his tribe,  
He had said: "Follow me."

His father's grass grown grave was there;  
The tender, mother eyes,  
That first looked into his with love,  
Closed, under Moro skies;  
And, at their closing, entered in  
To that great mystery,  
Which hath its secret hidden deep  
In God's Eternity.

There had his wild and savage heart,  
Convention undefiled,  
Leaped in his breast, when they had said:  
"O, Chief! behold your child!"  
There he had dreamed the age-old dreams  
Which know no East, nor West;  
Dreams which come trooping with the beard,  
'And will not let man rest.

And when the interloper came  
And bade him cringe and cower;  
He could not understand—nor can  
The alien, at this hour.  
Aye, though before high heaven's bar  
The stranger he dragged, chained,  
He could not answer aught, save this:  
"Much loot may there me gained."

Wherefore the untaught Moro fought,  
Until was snapped life's cord—  
I would have cursed him for a wretch,  
Had he once sheathed his sword.  
And no man, save the craven cur  
Whose soul is in his purse,  
Would, had the Moro failed to strive,  
Done otherwise than curse.

Each man whose father's kindly voice  
Welcomed him, at his birth;  
Each man who knew a mother's love;  
Each who, from all the earth,  
Chose one to walk life's devious ways  
With him, through sheen and shade,

Would have the Moro chieftain cursed,  
Had he borne virgin blade.

Each man to whom a maiden's eyes,  
In love had lifted been,  
Had he bowed down a willing neck,  
Each would have cursed him then.  
Yea, had he failed to march and fight  
And struggle to be free,  
Unto the last, each would have cursed  
Him in Eternity.

And so they killed him for his faith!  
Poor devil! there he stood,  
Between the chains of thin veneer  
And wild, free, brotherhood!  
They had to kill him where he stood  
A menace to their peace!  
His pagan blood they had to pour  
Before their god; "Increase."

They had to kill him; there he stood;  
Still savage, truculent;  
But, O, a freeman, struggling still,  
And dying thrice content!  
The little kites know where he lies,  
Beside the sounding sea;  
Hard by his sheltering mountain cave,  
A patriot, dead, but free.

Yea, long before his slayers knew—  
Before they even guessed  
That Moro raised her fringe of palms  
Beyond the restless West,  
This island chief had learned the wild,  
Free tongue of southern nights;  
Had learned it so he envied not  
The eagle on the heights.

Dry-eyed a Moro widow greets  
The languorous southern dawn,  
And feels, somewhere, her lord awaits,  
With all his armor on.  
A Moro man-child lifts his eyes  
Unto his mother's face—  
Deep in his heart springs into birth  
The deadly feud of race.

Son's filial feet, revengeful now,  
Will seek the jungle path;  
Hard by that mountain cave will blaze  
A beacon to his wrath.  
His mercy will be gaged by that  
Which brough his sire a bier,  
And his blood-orphan's brand will make  
His hiding a frontier.

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### Report of Chief of Statistics of Hades.

The Chief of Statistics of Hades looked up,  
And he tinkled an asbestos bell,  
And said to an Imp: "Go and bring me a cup  
Of hot pitch, from the nethermost well;  
For I need something cooling; my brain is afire!  
So hurry, you whimpering thief!"  
Then he said to another: "Here! go touch the wire  
And send this report to the Chief."

#### The Report:—

"—The Chief of Statistics of Hades unto  
His Majesty; Father of Lies:  
The honor I have of transmitting to you  
A report that, no doubt, will surprise.  
We are short on pit coal at the Mail Order kiln  
And of racks at the Dry House wherein  
We prepare for the fireworks the fellows who fill  
The earth with a cheap brand of sin.

The experiments that I conducted of late,  
By the which I sought to ascertain,  
The relative worth of a self dumping grate  
For the "Friends of the People" called "plain;"  
Have been a success and I now have no doubt  
But what, to great profit, we can  
Use them in all furnaces where we try out  
"The Friends of the Laboring Man."

The nice, little preachers, who failed to disturb  
Your servants, for fear of their pay,  
We are using for lamp posts; for hitch racks and curb  
On the street called; "Iscariot Way."  
This reduced the surplus in this department  
So the "Standing Room Only," legend  
Can be now taken down and with safety be sent  
To "Department of They Who Pretend."

The "Legal Asylum for Judicial Sin"  
Is crowded to such an extent,  
That we have to use shoe horns to wedge the souls in  
And instructions had better be sent  
To our agents on earth, that, 'till further advised,  
They're directed to frankly confess  
That the definition, in former years prized,  
Is the best one for "Legal Success."

Since we started to make incandescents out of  
The men who don't vote as they pray  
The "Lost Soul's Electric Light" stock soars above  
Par and is at premium today.  
We have solved the problem of the small hearts that pump  
Blood so cold it would put out the fires;  
We use them for clinker cans, down on the dump,  
And to insulate high voltage wires.

The gossip supply for the "Sewer Pipe" plant  
Is far in excess of our need—  
For making this pipe they're the best thing extant,  
But I think we should curtail the breed;  
Or find other use for our surplus; for I  
Am informed by head moulder, McTesh,  
That those that are stacked up, or lay round and dry  
Are inferior to those that are fresh.

At the "Business Arcade," there must something be done;  
It is crowded so, here of late years,  
That all the attendants, save, possibly, one,  
Are compelled to roost on chandeliers!  
However, I'm by our designer advised  
That this glut of "Commercial Muldoons"  
Could be greatly relieved should we mold them in prized  
And profit fraught souvenir spoons.

The captain of sailing ship, "Sardonic Mirth,"  
Sent a long wireless message to me  
Of his passenger list—each one, "Salt of the Earth,"  
And I told him to dump 'em at sea;  
That they should ship these is my standing. "Why?"  
When there isn't a skipper but knows  
That the top of each pile of them now is so high  
That 'tis covered with eternal snows—"

"That is all for the present." The chief rose and quaffed  
His hot pitch; then he threw down the cup.

"That'll hold the Old Man for a while!" Then he laughed

As he said: "Well, I guess it is up  
To me to relieve these congested affairs—

Yes, 'tis up with a vengeance to me—  
This running a dump for all of earth's tares  
Is a job for your horns, tra-la-lee."

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### The World's Work.

The pride of the Spirit of Martha  
Lies in the things we can seize  
With the hands; as the ape his cocoanut hulls,  
His fish fins—and his fleas!  
The pride of the Spirit of Mary  
Is not of time, nor place;  
But to learn the truths of Eternal worth;  
By questioning, face to face.

They met; two men; one bronzed and tanned  
By sun and wind; of land on land;  
The other; stooped, and thin, and pale;  
From measuring life by printed tale—  
From burrowing, like mole, in earth,  
In many books—of little worth.

And he; who gave his eyes for power  
To strut a dim and fevered hour  
Before the mob; for vain acclaim—  
That some might, parfay, carve his name  
Upon some shaft, or coffin lid—  
To vanish—as old Pharaoh's did—  
Said to the bronzed one: "As I look,  
I see you have no scholar's crook.  
Your face is calm; your eye is clear;  
As one who oft has drawn anear  
To some renewing fount; while I  
To life am dust blown—dim of eye.  
Mayhap you've traveled long and wide;  
Heard much and seen much else beside;  
Read many tomes of garnered lore  
And, daily, added to your store  
Of learning: Seen, through dead men's eyes,  
All things; from earth to Paradise.  
Made their thoughts your thoughts and refrained  
From venturing—till all beasts were chained!  
If thus it be the World's Work waits  
For those so furnished by the Fates."

The bronzed one gazed into the sky;  
Where some wild fowl were winging by;  
Then off across the shimmering lea  
To where, knee deep, contentedly,  
In clover stood a goodly herd  
Of kine—and answered not a word.

The stooped one marked and drew more near;  
As though he deemed that dull of ear  
Must be the other, else he would  
At least have signed he understood:  
“Do you not comprehend?” asked he—  
The bronzed one nodded, silently.  
Then he who worshiped learning’s mesh  
Took up the tale and spoke afresh:  
“Work must be done! Great things achieved!  
Distress of all things be relieved  
By stress of labor and by pain  
Of body—and book furnished brain.  
The Word’s Work—which we have to do  
Is: Perfect that which hitherto  
Was crude—that which hereinbefore  
Was hampered, by our lack of lore!  
But now, by adding stood on stood  
Of written page and printed book—  
By theory of that and this—  
By scholarly hypothesis—  
By years of delving in dim light;  
Perusing books, both day and night,  
We, erudite above the norm,  
Shall the work of the world perform.”

He who had traveled wide then spoke:  
“To me the World’s Work is a joke;  
I’ve marked the Eastern potentate  
And those the Occident calls great;  
I’ve ate their salt and met their wives;  
Surveyed the frontiers of their lives—  
Marked that by which they set great store  
(As have their forbears done before);  
I’ve found them children—girls and boys—  
Save that they play with larger toys.  
Or, toys discarded, cumber all  
Of heaven’s vault with castle wall;  
Fare o’er old trails; wear city street;  
Impelled by urge of fevered feet,  
And each one frays and fades his soul

In striving for a phantom goal;  
Makes life a jest—a morgue of earth—  
In quest of things of little worth.  
I find the work, of which you speak,  
Is done by those who never seek  
Beyond the obvious; lest they find  
That they possess the thing called mind!  
Done by the sweat of heavy jowls;  
Whose owners mouth of fiat souls—  
By psuedo scientists who are  
Content with less than prison fare—  
By swart and low-browed sons of Cain  
Who wear a mental ball and chain."

"Stop!" cried the dim eyed. "Hitherto  
I must admit that this was true.  
By research, book, conclave, of late  
We've proven it, beyond debate.  
But herebefore, as you will own,  
Men have done the World's Work, alone.  
Now by law's sanction—custom's, too—  
The women equal share will do.  
With woman's help the coming years  
We'll fill with triumph—toll of tears!"

Replied the bronzed one: "I'll not own  
That men have ever worked alone.  
If good there be, if bad there be,  
The sexes must share equally  
In praise or censure, and by law  
The class of men I named will draw  
That caste of women who are fit  
Companions for their work, to-wit:  
Martha's dour sisters who, forsooth,  
Encumber age and throttle youth;  
Who, where the flowers in riot grow,  
Ply some grotesquely fashioned hoe  
And lay out paths; then wonder why  
The flowers, perversely, droop and die;  
Who flout, decry, the nightingale,  
Because it does not sing by scale!  
Who measure both the fool and sage  
By rule of dead and buried age!  
Who yardsick sin by quantity,  
Rather than essence—quality—  
Who are content to be—remain—  
Mere valets unto things—or gain.

Who cannot comprehend, nor see,  
Why, in His wisdom, Deity  
Made ordained ways for earth and sun  
And wild paths where the comets run.  
Why He did not add to his fame  
By making orbits all the same,  
And giving to the curve of vine  
The pedants grace of a straight line—  
Thus would He their grave censure missed,  
Of: 'Amateur Impressionist!'"

The dim eyed cried out: "Blasphemy!  
You make the specious, baseless plea  
As an excuse for you to shirk  
Your proper share of the World's Work!  
You speak as speak the indolent,  
Who scorn the succor to them sent,  
And, glorying in their listlessness,  
Drone through this living effortless;  
Thriftless; rebel to laws that we  
Ordain, that their efficiency  
May be augmented—that they bear  
Of the World's Work their equal share."

"Hold!" said the bronzed one. "You forget  
That there is indolence of sweat;  
And thriftlessness of thrift; and worse  
Than these the modern, book-fed curse;  
That acts of parliaments, or kings—  
Can change the nature of all things—  
That we have reached a Golden Age;  
In which fiat of printed page  
Or resolution, loudly clacked,  
Has power which the Creator lacked."

The dim eyed stood aghast, for he  
Was stark before a mystery;  
For men of sky and land and brooks  
Are mysteries to men of books.  
And mysteries they will remain  
Beyond the final day of pain.

He who had traveled wide spoke on  
And said: "Your kind can see no dawn  
Nor sunset; nor hear echo of  
The great world carol. From above  
No dew falls for them and their gift

Is—leaning where they think they lift.  
They note beetle and butterfly  
And, in dementia, wonder why  
The life they see bound up in these  
Was not made into honey bees—  
And that there should be song birds, too—  
When sheep and oxen are so few!  
Each one lays unction to his soul  
That far and wide of any goal  
Would fly the arrow of intent  
Had he not happened and have lent  
The aid of a book furnished mind  
To teach God how to loose and bind!  
They mouth about: 'Efficiency';  
But lack the inner eye to see  
Their 'Progress' means but guessing more  
On what was guessed on oft before;  
And, fatuously, strive to replace  
The gift of God by labors grace  
And in leisure to contemplate  
See nothing but sin cursed estate.  
In proof that some but think they think  
I cite their livery of ink—  
And printed page—and stick and stone—  
And borrowed things they think they own—  
Their fatuous pride in knowing what  
The world were gainer if forgot—  
Their belief in the senseless hoax  
Of: 'The World's Work'—the chief of jokes."

They parted, these two men, and one  
Thought of the other as undone  
And reprobate, and wore away  
His life—for: "What the people say!"

The pride of the Spirit of Martha  
Lies in the things we can seize  
With the hands; as the ape his cocoanut hulls,  
His fish fins—and his fleas!  
The pride of the Spirit of Mary  
Is not of time, nor place;  
But to learn the truths of Eternal worth;  
By questioning, face to face.

## The Legend.

There's a legend 'mong the angels; how the Premier, First  
Born soul,  
Called his messenger and to him gave command;  
That he go to earth and search it; east and west; from  
pole to pole;  
Mountain, valley, lake and river, sea and land;  
And return to him reporting of his journey, of his quest;  
Whether he had found upon the land or sea;  
In the east, grown old and mystic, or the young and virile  
west,  
Any memory of the Christ of Galilee.

How the messenger departed, down the highway of the  
skies,  
Past the chasm where the wandering stars are hurled,  
Sun by sun and void by void, straight onward as the swal-  
low flies;  
Past the loosed bands of Orion; world by world;  
Till the far and fettered stars gleamed wan and ghostlike  
on his view  
And the clamor of the earth marts smote his ear;  
Till he saw tall spires arising, pointing upward through  
the blue,  
And the battlements of heaven disappear.

Sought he first one strong and mighty; one whose name  
was on each tongue,  
And he questioned: "Know ye Christ of Galilee?"  
And the mighty one made answer: "Go to him who sits  
among  
Many books; for he is paid to know for me."  
Then the angel sought the scholar and he found him old and  
spare,  
Stooped by searching musty tones, with eyes grown dim,  
And the learned one, to his question, answered: "I find  
written fair,  
In my books a wondrous history of him."

Fareing forth he sought grand temples; temples risen in  
the name  
Of the Christ, and noted those who prayed therein,  
And he found them the possessors of the innocence of  
shame;  
Of the still born shame which lacks the power to sin!  
So he left them smug, complaisant, satisfied with earth  
and sky;

For he knew, that should he question, they would heed  
Not the import of the query, but would piously reply:  
"Yes, we know him—we have books from which we  
read."

Then he sought the marts and highways; women turned  
him from their door;

Strong men pushed him from the fountains in the  
street;

The unkempt mob reviled him, as weary, sad and sore,

He walked the way with torn and bleeding feet.

He passed from these to the waters, waters bound and  
waters free,

Ever asking: "Know ye? Do ye understand?"

As his recompense came knowledge that the followers of  
the sea

Were full brethren to the dwellers on the land.

But the beggars gave him shelter and a harlot gave him  
bread,

And the way-worn in the highway took his hand;  
To them he put his question; in reply each, whispering,  
said:

"We have heard, but then we cannot understand;  
For the ones who tell us of him hunt us as they hunt the  
beast;

Spoil us as the robber spoils the caravan;  
Count us as dumb, driven cattle, from the greatest to the  
least—

Are they like him—they who tell us of his plan?"

Then the angel told them of him; how he lived and how  
he died,

How he walked the path of pain to Calvary;  
How he broke death's bands asunder and was crowned  
and glorified,

To the end that all his brethren should be free.  
But they, wide-eyed, gazed upon him, wonderingly and in  
alarm,

As they said: "This is the tale we oft have heard  
In calm days preceding those in which its bearers brought  
us harm;

It compels us, but we've come to fear each word."

Then the angel, heavy hearted, with his burden weighing  
sore

Took his journey up the white soul's star marked way;

Sun by sun and void by void, until the dream light hovered  
o'er

All his pathway and before him heaven lay.  
Fareing thence into the city, by the thoroughfare of Peace,  
The Master met and said: "I welcome thee.  
But what is this thou bearest? The thongs loose and  
release

The burden from thy shoulders and stand free."

Then the messenger made answer: "Lord, obeying thy  
behest

To discover if earth held thee in its ken,  
I have searched it, land and water, north and south, and  
east and west,

And I bring you here the memories of men.  
'Tis a sore and heavy burthen, but it is not all their blame,  
There is other; this I brought that ye may look  
On their laches without favor, when they seek thee in  
the name  
Of a christ they filched from out a printed book."

But the Master smiled and answered: "Faithful mes-  
senger of mine

Ye have met those whom no lapse of memory;  
Nor no strong doubts, fraud engendered, can draw dividing  
line

Between, or separate, from heaven or from me."  
So the angels have this legend of the Premier, First Born  
Soul;

Of the messenger sent forth with a command;  
Of his quest and his returning with the record of men's  
dole,  
And the angels all the legend understand.

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### The Bulwark of the Law.

"The bulwark of the law!" none save the fool  
And he who cozens thrift from off the fool,  
Thus speak of all that vast entanglement  
Of statutes and decisions; by which men  
Have halved their kind and, rashly, outblasphemed  
All blasphemy; by setting boundary stones,  
And drawing lines, where God doth hesitate.

"The bulwark of the law!" Judicial owls,  
Sans all, save pseudo dignity, sit on  
Old benches; which the veriest, vagrant worm  
Would scorn as habitation; as it would

Old Pharaoh's coffin, in some museum!  
Amid the dense and ancient foliage  
Of dead men's reasoning do they sit and blink  
In solemn state. The more of light you give;  
More blind they grow; but Nature's recompense  
Strengthens their cords to hoot, and hoot, and hoot;  
"The bulwark of the law!" for plaudits of  
Pied pirates—academic ravens croaks;  
And the owl's homage—awe of lesser owls!

Of the habiliments—accoutrements,  
Of jester and of harlequin; they lack  
Naught but the cap; the bells and tufted wand.  
(E'en these they have, in psychos; which unto  
The jungle folk are undiscernable.)  
"Nightgowns of Progress," is much nearer truth,  
Than "Robes Judicial" for the things they wear;  
When murdering Justice; by some specious rule  
Of pseudo logic, or, hyena like,  
Robbing the graveyard of dead intellect  
And hiding both their crimes in long drawn out  
Collections of sonorous euphonies.  
"Judicial Robes!"—then justice has from grace  
Fallen much farther than did Lucifer—  
And yet owls wear them in the face of all  
The centuries sloughing off of the outworn  
And useless badges of a primitive  
Mentality; which spent its time and strength  
In forging chains and shackles; that it might  
Return mankind to agitation of  
A rudimentary membrane; as a means  
Of thought. No doubt the angels unto mirth  
Are wakened when they see owls sit; arrayed  
So they appear like unto toothless dames  
Who cackle in some chimney nook and live  
In past decades and talk in retrospect.

Clothed in their "Robes" they augment all that stale,  
Soured, rancid, mess of dry-rot dignity;  
Which awes, to trembling, all the greasy capped  
And evil smelling arm pit horde of fools;  
Who dote on quantity; regardless of  
The quality of the vain object of  
Their shallow, imbecile idolatry:  
And this, whether they purple wear and mouth  
Of long descent; or fustian clothed fare through  
The avenues of life, in ignorance of  
Grandsires and grandames, and their place and state.

The moth would look upon their "Robes" in sheer,  
Dazed wonder and regard them much as does  
The stolid, dense, unlettered youth esteem  
An ancient mummy from the Pyramids!

When passing on the guilt or innocence,  
Of one who steals a loaf, they rob the tomb  
Of Outworn Things; of that which is its due.  
And from their dead limb perch, all void of sap  
Or bark of reason (even void of that  
Poor substitute; the gray beard, Spanish moss  
Of legal logic—long unsepulchred.)  
These owls hoot, "Bulwark of the Law!" while they  
Who steal a state or rob a commonwealth,  
These owls brand: "Benefactors of mankind."

"The bulwark of the law:" The rights of man  
Were hedged by the first parchment! Added ones  
Have been a slightly narrowing hedge within  
Another, or all others, until now  
The crumpled center has no vision for;  
No yearning after; nor traditions of;  
The wide sweep of its first circumference.

"The bulwark of the law!" Once pirates were  
Much nearerer manhood's measure. They dared risk  
Their necks for loot. They now have given o'er  
The cutlass; for the wanton's ancient wand  
Of cozenry, and plied a wanton's trade  
Where laws are sanctioned and where sanction is  
Raped by construction of Judicial Owls—  
If so it please the waver of the wand.  
A timid breed; these modern Buccaneers,  
Chary of all their predecessors dared;  
Yet, more rapacious; since more safe from harm;  
By reason of their "Bulwark of the law!"  
From behind which they sally, devastate,  
Loot, murder, throttle right, make refugees  
By proxy—as do all degenerates!  
Their cozenry of owls and fools attests  
Their lack of e'en a felons claim to praise.  
Were they the spawn of Satan they would bring  
Dishonor on a sire all honorless!  
If mothered by a Harpy they would drown  
In slime pit shame their slime impervious dam!  
If born in Satan's realm, would traitors prove  
Unto their country and would utterly  
Bankrupt it, were it forced to disinfect

Against the scourge of their degeneracy!  
They have not left the sea void of their sail,  
But, rather, joined the land unto the sea  
And made themselves a larger "Spanish Main,"  
One more secure; one with no shore on which  
To raise a gibbet: One where sleep is void  
Of yard-arm visions! They have torn the skull  
And cross-bones emblem from their flag and in  
Its stead have cozened cave-man hands to paint,  
In sophist's colors: "Bulwark of the law!"

"The bulwark of the law!" constructed by  
The morbid minded; those who mouse and mouse  
For paltry prey; by rancid reasoners; those  
Who shame the compass with opposing points!  
More oft by stipend serving wights, who gain  
Their place by being pawns of politics—  
Mere pirates puppets, nothing more—nor less,  
Pouch bellied squires to a swashbuckling horde  
Of battened brigands, at whose nod and beck  
They murder Justice by old "Precedent!"  
Who stutter, stammer, catch the breath and mouth:  
"Unto our sense of justice, questions here  
Presented strongly do appeal. They would  
Be difficult to solve, were not the same  
Foreclosed by statutes, and decisions old."  
Or, if not brave enough to give this lame  
Excuse of cowards, hide behind the phrase:  
"The law says thus—but the intent of that  
Which gave it sanction was the opposite  
Of the apparent meaning of the terms  
Inaptly used." Or, failing this, retire  
And, overnight, into the statute dream  
Some word—some needed, helpful euphony!

"The bulwark of the law!" The vast, grotesque,  
Unhewn, untempered, swallow nesting mass  
Of ruble, brings shame on the few hewn stones  
Of masterbuilders, found therein; which are  
Like sober corporals, in a drunken crowd  
Of slum caught privates, whose ambitions are  
To drink bars dry and court the courtesan.

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### Rampson.

The World gave Rampson his desire;  
Its people gave more, because

Through stretch of years and flood and fire  
They had followed their forebears laws—  
The laws of the man who held their mind  
In the shadow of his own,  
And drew the plan of their caste and kind,  
In the twilight age of stone.

Poor fools! they gazed, with approving eye,  
While stick, and brick, and stone,  
He flinched from others and piled them high,  
And called the pile his own!  
Their presses and type grew weary and worn,  
From oft repeating his name;  
But they could not change the man that was born,  
He was Rampson—just the same.

One day he died and they closed the stores,  
And down at the City Hall  
The band came out, through the crepe draped doors,  
And played the "Dead March in Saul."  
And the Spirit of music sadly smiled,  
As he said: "They are not to blame;  
By darkened minds they have been beguiled;  
He is Rampson—just the same."

And the little children hushed their play,  
As they've hushed, since time began,  
Whenever the Angel, grim and gray,  
Has touched their fellowman;  
But Time leaned over the winnowed soul  
And said, "In spite of the name  
Their elders under their tongues do roll,  
He is Rampson—just the same."

They buried him with the pomp of earth,  
And the fact of his decease,  
His life, his place and date of birth,  
Was flashed beneath the seas;  
But behind each tremor of cable core,  
Extoling his worldly fame,  
An echo repeated, o'er and o'er,  
"He was Rampson—just the same!"

Then the soul of Rampson took its way,  
Self-conscious of its worth,  
Through the great white waste and hush where lay  
The trail for the souls from earth;

At last it came to the thrice barred gate  
And said: "I'll knock and see  
Why none upon this side await  
To greet and welcome me."

An angel ope'd to the withered soul  
That weakly smote the bars,  
And the angel said: "Now for your dole,  
In the High Court of the Stars,  
Make answer unto what is plead—  
Full issue join with me;  
'Tis writen, what ye did and said,  
Ye may answer now, pro. se."

"Why, down on the earth," said Rampson then,  
"My voice was heard with heed;  
I have given enough to want-bound men  
To purchase your Master's meed."  
"Ye gave what ye filched from the way of pain  
And the poor who travel there;  
There your reward was applauded gain,  
But here your soul is bare."

Said Rampson: "On earth I'd an honored name;  
I was honest called as well."  
Then the angel: "Aye, you may bear the same  
In the nethermost pits of hell!  
For the devils know the law of degree  
In all things—even the flame  
But wherever you stop in Eternity  
You'll be Rampson—just the same."

Then Rampson: "Great ships have carried me  
As far as great ships can."  
But the angel languidly said: "I see,  
But did they carry a man?"  
"Why, yes," said Rampson, much surprised,  
"Twas so on the lists, that's clear."  
Said the angel: "Lists? Well, be apprised;  
It is not so written here!"

"The lists of men, for their puny needs,  
May answer and answer well,  
But neither lists, nor the count of beads,  
Will answer for heaven or hell.  
Ye are what ye are because ye were born,  
Ye were born because ye would choose  
The way of spoil and the path of scorn  
And the road of a springing use."

“What profit then,” said the withered soul,  
“Is it that I do or dare?  
What profit that I come here whole  
Or maimed, or halt, or bare?”  
“Ye had profit enough in the praise of fools,  
That so full and fair ye have known;  
But there’s other in this; that your kind are tools  
By the which we chisel our own.”

“Ye might enter in where the tall souls dwell,  
The souls ye have scorned on earth,  
But ye would pray for the deepest hell  
When ye felt your proper worth.  
Then fare ye forth to the outer vast  
By the gate through which ye came,  
Somewhere ye will find your proper caste  
Of withered souls and lame.”

“The stars may freeze in the farthest north;  
The world’s may groan in pain;  
The far suns travail and bring forth  
As summer clouds bring rain;  
But whether ye go by world or star,  
Or sun, or mist, or flame,  
Ye ever will be the thing ye are—  
Ye’ll be Rampson—just the same!”

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### Desert Song.

The Desert is wild as a love got child,  
With a heart like the heart of a maid,  
And they who ride with her as a bride  
Have never coerced, nor prayed.  
They hold their soul intact and whole  
And pity the witless one;  
Convention dyed and satisfied  
And asleep in Custom’s sun.

Go up and down, through field and town,  
And view the hedged lives;  
The husbands yearn and then, in turn,  
The psychic sin of the wives;  
The sin of a fiend, close cloaked and screened,  
From mortal eye and ken;  
More damnable, more fit for hell,  
Than the physical sins of men.

"Is it so ordained?" inquire the chained,  
When a branching path invites;  
Not knowing there waits, beyond Death's gates,  
No hell like their days and nights.  
"What will folk say?" What matter if they  
Shall censure or shall praise?  
Better were you dead than that you tread  
Another man's beaten ways.

I had rather fall, from the top of all,  
To the lowest depths of hell,  
Sans bind and chain, than to remain  
On the heights and have men tell  
Of me as a slave, who freely gave  
His soul for a purple gown  
And wore a chain on hand and brain  
To save from falling down.

I hate your marts; they shrivel your hearts,  
And I'll carry my feud till death;  
With the fervor and fire of a fanned desire  
And the scorch of the tempest's breath!  
Your customs, too, which are part of you,  
In the scorn of the mountaineer  
I hold them all, both great and small;  
They are children of Fraud and Fear.

Your books be damned, with them you have crammed  
Men's minds with vagaries;  
And crowded their years with cares and fears  
And a legion of heresies.  
What you believe; to what you cleave;  
Matters nothing at all to me;  
Of manly men is my Sovereign,  
Whatever he may decree.

Your vacuous smile for the weary mile  
That men must walk alone,  
Is of like worth to the gray old earth  
As your worship of stick and stone.  
Your values stamp, on home or camp,  
Is 'the child of Dread and Doubt,  
And your measure of sin, not things within,  
But alien things without.

To the depths of hell your dogmas fell;  
To the pit with your theories spun;

By a soul distraught by a fevered thought;  
By the spell of its Ego's sun!  
I had rather stand by the stern right hand  
Of the franchised and the free,  
Than wear the chains and receive the gains  
That can be had with thee.

With easy grace I'll smile in the face  
Of the storm which frights your soul;  
For well I know no winds may blow  
To keep me from my goal.  
The storm may rise and along the skies  
The tempest howl and moan;  
But it has no power, for a single hour,  
To bar me from my own.

Go wear your chain of a shackled brain;  
It was forged for a willing slave;  
But those there be who cannot see  
Nobility in a knave.  
The thoughts of men who once have been  
Are oracles for thee;  
These have sufficed as your only Christ;  
But they hold no bind for me.

Whatever you do; whatever your view;  
Whatever your estimate;  
Of me and my tribe, do not ascribe  
Our destiny to Fate;  
For in truth we be of they who are free;  
Of they who have, manly, trod  
The earth so fair, and, too, who dare  
To look in the face of God.

Your complacency smug, with which you drug  
Your remnant of womanhood,  
That you may raise a pean of praise  
From the lips of the uncou' good;  
Is as fit for hell as all deeds fell  
Which men have ever assayed;  
Yet, 'tis yours by right of your natal night  
And your only stock in trade.

The mark of mind that lies behind  
Your undesigned advent—  
Which brought you forth, in the sodden north,  
Unwelcome and accident;  
Which, with the dole of an hunchbacked soul,

Refused to stand or be  
In the company of the tall and free;  
Is the jewel of your degree.

Your ideas wrapped in words inapt;  
Your fetich of printed page,  
No doubt are meet for your reeking street—  
Fit gods for a sodden age.  
They have filled your land with the talon hand,  
The flattened nostril and chest,  
And still more dire, have quenched the fire  
Which burns in a manly breast.

Should I remain in your school of gain  
What is it you offer me;  
That I may take with me when I make  
My march to Eternity?  
Is it the things which make your kings  
And in which you are steeped and dyed—  
Things sans and purge, because sans the urge,  
Of the first great fratricide?

What mark or sign do you find of mine  
That you should account me dense  
Enough to remain and wear your chain  
For your tinsel recompense?  
The mob's acclaim? A deathless name?  
What boots all this to me,  
If I be scarred, or my spirit barred  
From the heritage of the free?

And when I have won to a central sun  
And the hand of Fame, what then?  
God! I would trade the faithless jade  
For the desert walk with men!  
For the desert walk and a manly talk  
With men whose blood is warm;  
Men who are free, who dare to be  
The foes of empty form.

Yea, the desert is wild as a love got child;  
With a heart like the heart of a maid;  
And they who ride with her as a bride  
Have never coerced, nor prayed.  
They hold their soul intact and whole  
And pity the witless one;  
Convention dyed and satisfied  
And asleep in Custom's sun.

## Look Out!

Look out for the woman who once was the belle  
Of a short-order counter, or country hotel;  
Who shoved the hot biscuits or polished the plates  
And kept tab on the drummers' diversified gaits;  
If she ever succeeds in becoming a wife  
The girls that she hires, you can bet your sweet life,  
Had better step lively and keep in the clear,  
For, sure she's a lady—a real Vere de Vere!  
And if you don't know it you'll wish you had croaked  
Ere the knowledge had into your thinker been soaked  
By her hauty demeanor, her patrician air,  
Her petty exactions, her would-be-stern stare—  
If you know your velocity—what you're about,  
For the ex-hotel belle you will always look out!

Look out for the man who from off the apex  
Of a dump has descended and learned to wear specs;  
Who stands 'round and brags of his strong Highland blood  
And acts like all else were made out of thin mud!  
But who, in real truth, gets excuse for his life  
From a nondescript bunch who dwell north of the Fife;  
The whom it would hurry, in the great race of man,  
To get sight of the natives in Northern Japan.  
You can tell by the way that he makes others jump,  
The man who has once been the lord of a dump.  
He wonders just why the Creator broke ground,  
Or dared to start things ere he happened around,  
Or why, without him, they've not gone up the spout—  
For the ex-Lord of Dumpdom you'd better look out!

Look out for the woman who always will put  
Her praises in escrow by saying: "Yes, but—  
You know folks do talk—they're so prone to throw soot;  
I love the dear girl—I really do, but—"  
Then an arch of the brows and the Pharisee's turn  
Of the subject, a fashionable tilt of the urn  
And another cup poured in dense silence and then  
Some casual remarks about various men  
With whom "she" had kept company, then a homily  
On proper deportment, with air "look at me  
And be ye admonished that in all the earth  
There are none so pure, of such excellent birth."  
For these I-can't-err women who their own virtues tout  
It will pay to be wary—to always look out!

Look out for the man with the sanctified grin,  
Who is free from all error, shortcomings and sin;  
Who thinks all who dissent from his creed should be scored;  
Who prays long and loud and advises the Lord  
Just how to run things if He would not abort  
His plan and wind up in the bankruptcy court;  
Who sings, with great unction, "By Grace I am saved,"  
And lives on the proceeds of notes he has shaved:  
Who sheds scalding tears for the heathen who live  
Far over the ocean, but who would not give  
A cent to the widow who lives near his home,  
Because the said widow refuses to come  
And kneel at his shrine and be learned how to shout—  
For this brand of sanctity, brethren, look out!

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### Slaves.

Slaves are we to foolish fancies,  
Bound by half remembered things,  
Twice content to walk as villains  
In the broad highway of kings.

Shackled by the mobs approval,  
Overawed by eye and air,  
Lacking the poor consolation  
That our curse is free from care.

Knowing not the power of nature,  
Fearing only social storms,  
Moulded, like the clay insensate,  
Into artificial forms.

And the story of our thralldom  
Is the story of our life,  
And our market place the forum  
Where the simple choose a wife.

Where they barter peace in prospect,  
For the chimera's of the young,  
And hang freedom on the slender  
Tenure of a woman's tongue.

Slaves who suffer moss grown maxims  
To retard the march of mind,  
Scurvy knaves, who mould the present  
By the thought that lies behind.

Cowardly and craven also,  
Blindly driven day by day,  
Ruled, not by the force within us,  
But by; "what will people say."

Bartering all the strength of manhood,  
All the gold of head and heart,  
For a travesty on nature  
Which the idiot calls "art."

Slaves, and slaves without the knowledge  
Of our bondage and our shame,  
Blindly, like a pagan, kneeling  
At the shrine of place and name.

Slaves, who sneer and take our portion  
Of the universal curse,  
For the honor of the idol  
That we carry in our purse.

Slaves to starched abominations  
And to clumsy fashioned things,  
Bearing labels; "these are proper,"  
"These are very pretty things."

Aye, the story of our thralldom  
Is the story of our days,  
Yet, for empty smiles and phrases,  
We affirm that slavery pays.

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### A Demand.

Men, I'm tired of your dogma's,  
Running in an ancient groove;  
Weary of incessant clamorings  
For the things you cannot prove,  
And I rank myself as rebel  
To your vain and musty creeds;  
Creeds which quench each generous heartbeat;  
Creeds which mock men's direst needs.

Too, your fevered speculations  
And your learning drive me wild—  
To the Pit with all your theories,  
Give me instinct of the child!  
Whence am I and whither fareing?  
And by what law shall judged be?

By the primal law of being,  
Of your dogma of degree?

Aye, the life that beats within me,  
Surging strong, that it may find  
An expression of its being,  
Through the gateway of my mind;  
Shall it stand, at last, and answer;  
Answer singly and alone,  
For the shackles forged and fashioned  
In the twilight age of stone?

Answer me, ye human censors,  
'Tis my right to thus demand  
That ye speak and answer truly,  
So that I may understand.  
If of right ye wear the ermine,  
Write my duty, clear and free,  
On a tablet and beneath it,  
Origin and destiny.

Aye, ye cannot? By what edict,  
Answer me, then do ye bind  
Shackles on my wrists and ankles;  
More important, on my mind?  
Whence, to hear and to determine,  
Do ye jurisdiction draw?  
Answer! Long have I been searching  
For the sanction of your law!

Tell me, do the ways men travel,  
Ere they sleep beneath the sod,  
Lead unto the port, Oblivion,  
Or lead upward, unto God?  
If Oblivion, by what standard  
Will ye judge desert or dearth?  
If to God, who made you vicars  
And vice-Regents on the earth?

Answer me! I here adjure ye  
By the heartbeats of my clan  
And by the more potent passport  
Of my love for fellowman.  
Resident within my nature  
And appurtenant to my mind,  
Is the right to thus adjure ye,  
For myself and all my kind!

What! ye cannot? Oh, ye tyros:  
Infants crying in the night;  
With no satisfying language  
Save your paltry wail for light!  
Take your palsying hands from off me!  
Leave me with my right, my own!  
What are you to guide, or hamper?  
Let me be myself alone!

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## When Are We Going Home Again?

(See Note)

When are we going home again,  
Back to the blessed hours;  
Back to the cool, sweet, dew-wet glen;  
Back to the leaves and flowers?  
I'm tired of all the haunts of men;  
I'm tired of witless ways,  
And oh, my heart yearns back again,  
To olden, golden days.

So, when shall we go home again;  
When are we going home;  
Back from the fevered dreams of men;  
Back to the morning gloam?  
I'm tired of all the things I've learned;  
Full tired of the stress;  
Tired of the wanton fire which burned  
Me to forgetfulness.

When are we going home again—  
When are we going home;  
Away from foibles festered glen,  
Never again to roam?  
I'm tired of hypothesis;  
I'm tired of fevered guess;  
I'm tired of thus, and that, and this,  
Which makes us all the less.

When are we going home again—  
When are we going home;  
Back to the heritage of men;  
Back to the golden gloam.  
This torrid Urge is ageing me,  
Beneath the guise of Truth;  
And oh, my heart yearns, ceaselessly,  
For the simple things of youth.

## When Are We Going Home?

(See Note)

When are we going home, my brother—  
When are we going home?

The night creeps up and the wind blows cold;  
And the steppes are bare of all, save gold;  
And strange shapes dance in the gathering gloam—  
Tell me—when are we going home?

When are we going home, my comrade—  
When are we going home?

We have wandered far and no chart have made;  
Have exorcised; but no ghosts have laid.  
The fox-fire lure of the clans that roam  
Is ours—when are we going home?

When are we going faint farer—  
When are we going home?

I wonder if our eyes again  
Shall look on home—the fruitless pain,  
Born of our conning tome on tome,  
Augments—when are we going home?

When are we going home, my brother—  
When are we going home?

The night is black, upon the wold;  
I'm tired of gathering shouts and gold—  
I'm tired of plumes, of sound, of foam—  
Tell me—when are we going home?

Note: I have a habit of writing things and then throwing them into a trunk. The first of these I wrote in 1910, while in Missouri—threw it in the trunk and forgot it. In 1914, while on a train in Colorado, I wrote the second, thinking at the time I was producing something new. I never knew I had duplicated until April, 1916. A plain case of unconscious plagiarism on myself. It is now up to the pseudo psychologists to see some deep, or sinister significance in this, which same is undreamed of by myself.

S. L. L.

---

## As of Eld.

Dogma's of immortality, and gods our fathers knew;  
Were born of insularity—and nursed by shortened view.  
Our dogma's—evoluted gods—now grown unto a host,  
Have no more fact of ancestry; on which to base a boast.  
And yet, we cling unto them, as our forebears did to  
theirs—  
While the jungle damps, that slew them, creep upon us  
unawares.

Our idol stabling forums; where the mighty tread the weak;  
Our justice, made by quorums, from ideals of claw and beak;  
Are still our fathers crudeness; though known by another name;  
Though tinseled o'er with smugness are, in essence, just the same.  
We mouth of our "advancement" and with dulled myopic, eye,  
In our self induced entrancement, as our fathers died, we die.

Our law, wherein we bungle, e'en in deifying gain,  
Is a shadow of the jungle; echo of the Spanish Main.  
'Tis the same sad, lethal mixture by which ancient empires died;  
By which Socrates was taken; by which Christ was crucified.  
Our Pilate's; "It is written," makes us throttle truth and right;  
'Till the urge of power is smitten by a devasting blight!

Our customs are but gilded mud huts of an earlier day;  
With untempered mortar builded; on foundations of;  
"they say!"  
Than huts, from which we patterned, they will lesser time endure;  
For the thatch is placed more loosely and the door is less secure.  
Yet, in bald pride of mere gilders, we lay unction to our souls;  
That our names, as Master Builders, written are on Heaven's rolls.

Wherein our elders claimed the power to change the things that be,  
By fiat, we at this late hour deem that, by euphony,  
We can call into being things that heretofore were nil;  
And shame the first Creator; with our formula of: "I will!"  
Despite our vaporous vaunting; we cannot control our breath;  
Nor our shuddering in the haunting shadow of our father's death.

Faith, hope, and love, and gladness; death, despondency, and hate;  
Of our fathers, with their madness, is, at best, our own estate.

Wherein they were free, or hampered, we are free or hampered too;  
Born, as were theirs, are our dogma's; like theirs nursed by shortened view.  
We fight for, cling unto them as, aforetime, they to theirs—  
While the jungle damps, that slew them, creep upon us unawares.

---

### The Immortals.

Only those souls are immortal  
Who have, rashly, lived, or died,  
For the freedom of their fellows;  
Who, against strong, or feeble tide,  
Of oppression, set their faces counting cross and recking cost  
As a privilege—not a duty, wherein urge and gift is lost.

---

### Biographical.

He owned great ships, and a caravan,  
And he drank from a golden bowl;  
He mastered the marts of Martaban;  
But his was a still-born soul.  
He won to a place on power's plateau,  
And he held it there, alone,  
But his soul never cried and they buried it deep  
'Neath mortar, and stick, and stone.

He held the lure of the craven Clod,  
For which they barter blood  
With less concern than the Hindoo flings  
Her child to the Ganges' flood!  
And the fawning folk, with their bended knees,  
And the fools, with their tremblings,  
Made haste to bring him a crown, and write  
His name in the Book of Kings.

He died—and the mills that grind and grind,  
For the puny pride of men,  
For a moment paused—and then ground on  
As though he had never been!

They raised a stone, with his name deep carved,  
O'er the case of his widowed clay;  
But they raised no stone to his soul, because  
They knew not where it lay.

But out in Eternity's waste and hush—  
White hush, beyond our ken—  
In a sepulchre, sealed fast for aye  
By the Angel of Might-Have-Been,  
Is a still-born soul; which might have grown,  
Save for the blight of gold,  
Into that which no sepulchre  
In Eternity could hold.

---

### Comet Souls.

There be strange and restless spirits  
Mixed among the sons of men—  
Comet souls; whose far flung orbits  
Are beyond the common ken.

They, the salt of all this living;  
They, who power and progress nurse;  
They, who, gainless, bear life's burdens;  
They, who, dauntless, dare its curse.

They, who ever tread the wine press;  
They who suffer; they who strive;  
They who, despite all revilings,  
Fight and keep their souls alive.

They my more than comrades, brethren;  
Ever marching down the way,  
Unto where some flag of battle  
Flutters in a new born day.

Them I reverence, love—not pity;  
Pity keep I for the ones  
Who have never marched through tempests;  
Who have never manned the guns.

---

### We Stand for It.

Loud we mouth about our culture; louder of our progress  
clack;  
We condemn the "Inquisition," but maintain a modern  
rack;

And our social "heated chambers" and the "thumbscrews"  
of our trade  
We extol; as being measures by which jungle ghosts are  
laid.  
Where our fathers met oppression with the bludgeon; then  
the gun;  
We cry: "Peace," or "Public Spirit,"—and then stand—  
stand for it, son.

Stand for hope—drawn men; the product of the tongues  
of nagging wives;  
Stand for women; whose brute husbands take the urge  
from out their lives;  
Stand for children of these classes; just as though there  
were a dearth  
Of the things that cumber living on this old and kindly  
earth—  
Just as though the race of progress never could be run  
and won,  
Were the runners not thrice weighted—aye, we stand—  
stand for it, son.

Stand for pirates in our commerce; as the Esquimaux for  
snow;  
Stand for legalized brigandage, if, perchance, the guinea  
grow;  
Stand for corporate encroachment and for parchment bul-  
warked greed;  
Stand for penny saving license—from which grows the  
dollar need.  
In entail of festering customs we find that which should  
be done  
And, like shackled slaves at market, we stand for it's  
doing, son.

Stand, like dumb and shambled cattle, and accept things  
as of course;  
Ready, at some dead man's dictum, to deny all innate  
force  
And to have it exiled, throttled, dissipated by the books  
In which youth, by rule, is simmered; by our learnings's  
slattern cooks—  
We are surfeited with "scholars"—underseasoned, over-  
done,  
For the glory of a theory—and we stand—stand for it,  
son.

## Tell Me Where the Christians Dwell.

Cease your praying, and your prating,  
Of your heaven, or my hell;  
Show me some of Yeshua's brethren;  
Tell me where the Christians dwell.

Over yonder? I have been there.  
They have master there, and slave;  
And the woman who has faltered  
Has no haven but the grave.

In yon valley? I have been there.  
There I sojourned many weeks.  
They have never trod the foothills;  
They have never seen the peaks.

On that mountain? I have been there.  
There the stunted cedars grow;  
And the coldness of their shadows  
Makes Gehenna of the snow.

By yon river? I have been there.  
There they dip, and wash, and lave;  
But their charity is lifeless  
And thrice ripened for the grave.

In that city? I have been there.  
There I found a ruthless strife;  
Found it beautified and garnished,  
Paved and lit with human life.

You can tell me, when I ask you,  
Where camp those who buy, or sell;  
But I search for Yeshua's brethren—  
Tell me where the Christians dwell.

---

## Fads.

We have sleep fads, and waking fads, and food, and healing,  
    fads galore;  
And walking fads, and bathing fads, and breathing fads—  
    and then some more.  
We follow fads as fatuously as though we were a bunch  
    of fools;  
Forgetting that humanity is not a set of written rules.

We've eugenic fads, and baby fads, and fads matrimonial;  
For fallen man's redemption—by process ceremonial.  
With printed rule we emphasize our fad fed imbecility—  
And plume ourselves that we have made a tyro out of  
Deity.

We have sounding brass and cymbal fads, to reform things  
political,  
And welfare fads, and uplift fads—as empty—hypocritical.  
Wherein our fathers were content to let the sleeping  
canines lie,  
We now appoint committees—and resolute and speechify.

We have fads educational; evolved by men, whom I sus-  
pect  
Were the possessors of a breath—much stronger than  
their intellect;  
Who never knew that learning was an alien to the hot  
house flower  
And worth and wisdom not within the compass of a parch-  
ments power.

We have fads for all who dwell on land and all who sail  
the seas in ships;  
E'en fads for killing microbes that lurk on the winsome  
maidens lips.  
We've staggered 'neath our load of fads until we've care-  
less, callous, grown;  
And too blase to institute a fad for letting things alone.

---

### The Crowd.

Oh, the great crowd; the aimless crowd; the crowd that  
eddies by;  
Forever feverish in pursuit of some historic lie;  
Forever chasing rainbows, up and down the dismal street—  
With its up and down, and back and forth, of weary,  
aching feet.

Oh, the paltry crowd; the mad crowd; that surges to and  
fro;  
And jostles in the canyon streets it may not overflow—  
A laggard to inniative—to habit overfleet—  
With its up and down, and back and forth, of weary,  
aching feet.

Oh, the sullen crowd; the fearsome crowd—a lion leashed  
by pride;

Cowed within dead men's bounderies; by fear of things outside;  
And milling, like a herd in storm, and wearing out the street—  
With its up and down, and back and forth, of weary, aching feet.

---

### What Does It Signify?

What does it signify; all the toil,  
The half requited and ceaseless moil  
In the mills and marts; the deadening cares,  
And the doubt that creeps up unawares;  
From the ditch beside the path where we,  
As conscripts, from the eternity  
Behind, march to the one ahead;  
What does it signify—when we are dead?

What does it signify—if, parfay,  
We are borne along the entire way  
In a sedan chair—if we wear a crown;  
A signet ring; and a purple gown;  
If the crown be usurped; the gown hide scars  
Unsightly; attesting the ankle bars  
Of soul or sense; if the signet ring  
Be only the badge of a passing king?

What does it signify, if perchance  
Some unique figure, in some new dance,  
We cut; for a paltry hour's applause;  
From the maudlin eaters of mental haws;  
Who bruise their palms and shout aloud;  
Lest they be censured by the crowd—  
The dog-souled crowd, with its neck of red;  
What does it signify—when we are dead?

---

### Why?

In youth I prayed for a heart of flesh  
And one was given me.  
But I prayed unwisely. I did not know  
What the future days would be.  
I have come to know that the daily fare  
Of the heart of flesh is stone;  
While the heart of stone has meat and to spare;  
That it dines in state, and alone;

While the heart of flesh must beat for all—  
Must beat for all, or die;  
And know the regret of questioning—  
Of ceaselessly questioning: “Why?”

In youth I prayed for a helping hand;  
For then the days were calm;  
And I, foolishly, dreamed that the greatest boon  
Was a fellow-serving palm.  
But the niggardly Pedro Garcia hand  
Has passed me on the way,  
And usurped lordship of sea and land,  
And lordship of those who pray.  
I stand and gaze with wondering,  
As the mad world circles by,  
And forces its gold in the niggardly hand  
While I, dazedly, question: “Why?”

In youth I prayed for willing feet;  
For the need of them I sensed.  
They came and have borne me many miles;  
But I still am unrecompensed;  
Save with the maddening coin of a sneer,  
From the ones whom I served the best,  
If, peradventure, I came anear,  
Or stopped, by the way, to rest.  
And the purple robe, and the gold, and gems,  
And the Crowd's applauding cry,  
Is for those who ride in a Sedan Chair,  
And I wonder—and wonder—“Why?”

---

### Hygienic.

She was tall and gaunt and her nose was thin;  
She'd a promise of whiskers—upon her chin.  
The pet obsession tacked onto her  
Was; that she was “called” as a scavenger  
Of the morals of earth and that she must rob  
All people of peace—to hold her job.

This beautiful world is filled with cranks;  
Who make of themselves mere septic tanks,  
And settling basins, for every phase  
Of human conduct, and through our days  
We have to stand it; for, by my faith,  
It was ever thus—as the scriptures saith.

## Vita Vista.

Oh, the tragedy of sowing, 'till we weary of the art;  
And its fellow; that of knowing such a little—little part.  
Oh, the tragedy of beating wounded wings against the bars;  
Wondering if there waits a meeting, somewhere out  
among the stars.

Oh, the tragedy of reaping where another hand has sown,  
And its counterpart; the keeping that which never was  
our own.

Oh, the tragedy of duty; with hope mocking from afar;  
Like the soul enchanting beauty of a distant evening star.

Oh, the tragedy of wearing shackles; dreaming we are  
free—

Greater still than this; our daring when it means Geth-  
semane.

Oh, the tragedy of wondering whence? and whither? how?  
and why?

As we ply our craft of blundering, with no language, save  
a cry.

Oh, the tragedy of staying in the maddened race for gain;  
And its likeness; that of praying, automatically and vain.  
Oh, the tragedy of feeling that a despite or a crime,  
Is that thing that we are stealing from the treasury of  
Time.

Oh, the tragedy of grieving, when we do not know the  
cause;

Born and nurtured of our leaving all our weal to written  
laws.

Oh, the tragedy of dwelling in the purlieus of the past;  
All the while concerned in selling souls to tabu and to  
caste.

---

## Playing.

We are playing witless, aimless;  
Through each process of the sun;  
Gnarling threads from which the visions  
And the dreams of life are spun.

Playing, recking not our gnarling  
Rob us of our first estate;  
Kenning not, where visions perish,  
Men and lands are desolate.

Playing, between banks of precept;  
Like some lowland rivers flow;  
With no majesty, save slowness,  
And not even warmth of snow.

Playing, seeing joy and gladness,  
As one on a barren shore,  
Marooned, through the veil of distance,  
Sees some vine embowered door.

Playing, knowing not within us  
Is the walled-in spring of joys;  
Sensing not the pulse we bridle  
Has the same urge as a boy's.

Playing, shackled by our station;  
Caste of book-lore—chattle—real;  
Like the lone child of late marriage  
Plays, robbed of the power to feel.

Playing, by the rules of dead men—  
Parents of futility;  
And our pity-gendering sporting  
Is life's staring tragedy.

---

### What Is It For?

What is it for; O my weary brother,  
You who are bound in the marts of trade,  
Why do you trample and jostle each other,  
Was it for this that the world was made?  
What is it for?

What is it for, this shortened vision,  
Purchased from books and the oil you burn;  
Learning the things, which, in their derision,  
Your children's children will strive to unlearn—  
What is it for?

What is it for, this ceaseless treading  
Of mills that vassal the kingly brow;  
Where the toll you take is fear and dreading  
Of thing tomorrow and hate of now;  
What is it for?

What is it for, this rush to the galleys,  
This pleading for place in their wind swept banks

Of oars; this content to act as valets  
To property rights, for a vote of thanks—  
What is it for?

What is it for, this deified labor;  
This war and turmoil of brain and brawn,  
Which has no king, nor friend, nor neighbor;  
Which sees no sunset and knows no dawn,  
What is it for?

What is it for, this knuckle knotted,  
This press that slants the brow of the child,  
Which, reinforced by a brain besotted,  
Hurls back a curse to the cry of the wild,  
What is it for?

What is it for, this planning and building  
And razing and planning and building again;  
This surface polish and tinsel gilding  
So eagerly sought by so many men,  
What is it for?

---

### Requiem.

There is no such thing as friendship, in this cloyed commercial age.  
It is interest—interest ever—which the minds of men engage.  
Stocks and bonds, and deed and mortgage, promise, guarantee, and pledge,  
Are the modern sum of duty and the goal of privilege.

Take the wife; what of her standard; her demandings;  
her ideal;  
Is it not outside opinion—this regardless of the real?  
Is it based on things intrinsic, fundamental, or, parfay,  
On the imbecile's foundation of what other people say?

Take the husband; all the years elapsing since he Eden knew  
Should have given him discernment—should have learned him what is true;  
Should have given him a standard, yet he, like a witless child,  
Still is bound by what his fellows designate a thing defiled!

Take the father; and the value of his offspring is the power  
To compel that which shall bring them praises of a present hour—  
To call forth the mob's acclaim and by it to be given place;  
Though the odor of its arm-pits make the angels turn their face!

Take the mother—her ambition—and to what does it ascend?  
The less said the sooner mended—yet, the whole world knows its end.  
Place and power—before the greasy caps to strut a fevered space;  
All regardless of the permanence of power, position, place!  
Love? Why, love is a tradition and a specter from the mist  
Of the past, and more than questioned if it ever did exist!  
God? A myth. And Christ? A fancy—human heartbeats but a dream;  
All mankind but flotsam, jetsam, on Life's sourceless, sealess, stream.

---

### Obiter Dicta.

I remember the Deacon; fat, smug, and complaisant,  
Who ran the big church that stood up on the hill;  
And how each Sunday morning he'd sing, with suave unction,  
"Tell me; will the waters of Jordan be chill?"

He owned several farms and the men who lived on them;  
The preacher was his and the opinion mill  
And its editor too, were some of his chattles.  
Yet he sang: "Will the waters of Jordan be chill?"

I knew how he got the "home place" from his mother—  
I knew how he'd handed a lemon to Bill  
His slow witted brother and therefore concluded,  
That there'd be no water in his Jordan to chill.

And still I am blest with that youthful opinion,  
I know it is right, if we have a just Lord;  
That all of the water that flows in his Jordan  
Will be turned into steam ere it reaches his ford!

Why, I'll bet that the ferry boat run by his Charon,  
Has stakes of asbestos and keel of fire brick,  
And that when he crosses 'twill be in the company  
Of men who have pushed little chicks in the creek!

Mayhap there's a Jordan whose waters are chilly;  
If there be, it is certainly not on his line  
Of travel and what most concerns me is wondering—  
Wondering and conjecturing if it is on mine.

---

### The Crowd and the One.

He saw the Grand Vision and, true to his clan,  
He followed it o'er the frontiers  
Of The Crowd; with its book; its bell; candle and ban;  
With its self conjured cares, fears, and tears.

His life fires burned only as prophet's fires burn,  
And the Near Great came out of their caves  
To blink in his presence, then yawn and return  
To their bat cumbered march to their graves.

Then he lost the Grand Vision and, wearied, sat down,  
And the Little Great jeered from the road;  
Where they, witless, swept by him, in buskin and gown,  
Impelled by the imbeciles goad.

But his weariness never grew into despair,  
For the Vision, a tangible thing,  
He was fully persuaded awaited somewhere  
For the fearless—the Sons of the King.

---

### The Vanished Country.

Yes, my Fatherland has vanished;  
Sometime, while its sponsor slept,  
Down the trail; into the shadows;  
Like a wounded thing, it crept;  
And it took its language with it;  
For no more I hear the tongue;  
Which was ancient, as to substance;  
As to form; so passing young.

Though far flung; it rolled its boundaries  
As a scholar rolls a scroll;

Choosing loss of place and power,  
Rather than of heart and soul.  
Had a worthy foeman menaced;  
So that, fighting, it might feel;  
It would have, unto the conflict  
Leaped; e'en 'gainst superior steel.

But against Form's vermined beggars;  
Fiat castes, and fevered cults,  
Wage of war were void of glory;  
Void of honor and results.  
Hence 'twere better that it vanish;  
Lest it too sink with the dense;  
The perfidious of purpose,  
And the votaries of pretense.

Better, too, my tribe were scattered;  
Than that they should lie and rot;  
Non-combatants, as to manhood,  
And, therefore, by God forgot.  
Better, too, our tongue be silent;  
Than that it should learn to frame  
Euphonies that serve no purpose;  
Save obesience to a name.

Yes, my Fatherland has vanished;  
I know not where it has gone.  
Mayhap I shall find its bounderies  
Just a little farther on—  
Better neither land, nor fellows,  
Than to fraternize, or tent,  
With the smug, who mine the slag dump  
Of the past; for precedent.

---

### Song of the Soldier.

We're "civilization's pioneers," whatever that may be;  
There ain't no lands we haven't seen an' there ain't any sea  
We haven't sailed; no mountain top on which we haven't  
stood;  
There ain't no heathen people's but what knows our aim is  
good.

Refrain—

Ho, it ain't the government what hurts;  
It ain't no bloomin' king;  
It ain't the boys in flannel shirts—  
Lor' it ain't anything

That you can see along the way from Bombay to the Mall!  
It's just the devil rollickin' an' rompin' through us all!

We're of the white, or ruddy, strain—the best Gawd ever  
made,  
And self-appointed guardians of every other shade.  
We're generous with our docile wards; from them we lift  
the curse  
But, Lor', we kills the malcontents—before they gets so  
worse!

Refrain—

We're needin' of some lumber, for to dot our conquests o'er  
With places where the rich may sin—with hovels for the  
poor!

The heathen ain't a-botherin' us, but, Lor', his mind is dim,  
And then his lands are fertile, so we're due to bother him!

Refrain—

And over in the Philippines they're gobblin' up their lands,  
An' down along the Congo Belgium's choppin' off their  
hands!

They're civilizin' 'em with guns, all over the Soudan;  
An' plantin' in the Orient, "Our Brotherhood of Man."

Refrain—

An' when we sees an island a-nes'lin' in the sea  
An' only room on it for one, we knows who it'll be  
Who'll be the sole inhabitant; we knows who'll ring the  
knell  
Of barbarism—if that isle has things what we can sell.

Refrain—

We sends 'em missionaries for to elevate 'em some  
An' what we can't kill with our guns we shuffle off with  
rum.

We're liberal with our Holy Writ—we're willin' for to trade  
The precepts what we never use, for place to stick a spade!

Refrain—

England's caressin' Thibet an' a-fondlin' Aff'gan'stan;  
An' if the Roosian Bear crowds down she'll trade him,  
man for man,

The best blood of her island for frost bitten blood and  
slow—  
For brothers blood—blood cooled and chilled these thou-  
sand years in snow.

Refrain—

An' whether 'tis for Wilhelm, who boasts of, "Me an' God,"  
Or for some other sovereign—or just a tuft of sod—  
The cry of, "for your country!" or even, "common good!"  
Sends us before the god of war to pour our cup of blood!

Refrain—

---

### Larceny.

Just today my boy was telling me about his algebra;  
I asked him about the chipmunk and he said: "I couldn't  
say."

I have tried to do my duty, but it causes some annoy  
To reflect, I've beat him out of what is due to every boy.

When I think about the boys and girls we're fitting for the  
strife

With the world, I wonder somewhat if they get their share  
of life;

Wonder if this feverish pushing, that on every hand I see,  
Isn't just another form of well-intentioned larceny.

They have more of passing knowledge and there's other  
things they know,

But they cannot see the pictures I beheld long years ago;  
There are some things where I ended just about where they  
begin,

But they cannot land a croppie with a hook made from a  
pin.

They may write, in shining letters, in the modern hall of  
fame,

But I've felt a grander thrill, when on the beech I carved  
my name,

With her name just underneath it; and then ran away for  
fear

The bunch would come and catch me and yell "girl-boy"  
in my ear.

They have mastered seas and rivers, where I only knew  
the creek,

But they couldn't set a trap to catch a muskrat in a week;  
They can tell about the craters and divisions of the moon;  
But they've missed the thrill at midnight, when the dogs  
had treed a coon.

---

### A Prayer.

From the highbrow fraternity;  
In Time and in Eternity,  
Great Lord of Hosts deliver me—  
—of them I'm weary.  
'Tis they who bind an innane girth  
Of speculations round Thy Earth;  
'Tis they who strangle, ere their birth,  
Joy and things cheery.

Deliver me! for I reflect  
That stronger than their intellect  
Their breath is—forsooth, I suspect  
They know it.  
And conscious of their low estate  
Of matter gray they prate and prate,  
Sans germ of idea in their pate—  
Sans aught to grow it.

They've peopled water, earth and air  
With vengeful foes. If nest of mare  
We prove their mounthings; they but stare  
In proud disdain,  
And conjure up some other shape,  
Bidding the tired world stand agape—  
When we their new invention rape—  
Invent again.

With flora of their microscope,  
And fauna, we must ever cope,  
And this without one ray of hope—  
If we must heed them.  
The race has weathered storm, and sword,  
And pestilence; now by Thy Word  
Crush them, with their dire horrors, Lord;  
We do not need them!

But if we must be thus accurst,  
Send Death and let him do his worst;  
E'en Death is kinder, for he durst  
But once to harm us!  
While they, but their continuing cry,

Compel us every day to die,  
By some truth-masquerading lie  
To fright—alarm us.

---

### Realization.

I know now why Mohommed sought the caves and lingered long;

And why, aforetime, Moses listened to the desert's song;  
Why every people's prophet against the priesthood cried;  
And why John Bunyan languished; why Christ was crucified.

I now know why usurpers back to the yester hark;  
And why each people's savior has sprung from out the dark;

Why history is the record of they who walked alone;  
Why there were unknown mothers of sons forever known.

I know now why the fountain of, seeming, bootless tears  
Has, ceaselessly, been flowing through all the turbid years;  
And why life's far flung circle is but a segment trod;  
Then sweeps within the shadows, to lose itself with God.

I now know why oppressors must, wolflike, hunt in bands;  
Why Liberty must fashion, with custom shackled hands;  
And why Death, the grim reaper, has seeming, naught to give;

Save rest, and why he takes us just when we've learned to live.

Wherefore, the old rebellion that surged within my soul,  
Gainst cares, and fears, and sorrows; iniquity, and dole;  
Has furled and cased its colors, and entered into rest—  
For that through all runs purpose and things that be are best.

---

### The Chained Tyrant.

When man first rolled to the mouth of a cave  
A stone, to stay the rush  
Of the lion, or wove a barrier of thorns  
In the heart of the primitive brush;  
He might have slept, by night, alone,  
In the crotch of a giant tree;  
And roamed secure, with his club by day;

A lonely soul—but free!  
But he chose the toil at the caverns mouth,  
And the jungle vigil behind  
The loose knit barrier his clumsy hands  
Had twined and intertwined—  
Why did he weave the barrier of thorn?  
And why did he roll the stone?  
Why did he toil—this jungle man—  
Was it just for himself alone?

He pulled the brush from a bit of ground  
And digged it, with his hands;  
He fought, with the birds, that flew in flocks;  
With the beasts that ranged in bands;  
For his planted seed, for the growing stem,  
For the harvest of ripened grain—  
Fought when there was food, and to spare, for him,  
In the forest and on the plain!  
He gathered his grain while the distance called  
And beckoned, early and late;  
But his ears were deaf, as the ears of love  
Are deaf to the words of hate.  
Why did he dig and why did he plant?  
Why guard what his hand had sown?  
Was it only the urge of a primitive whim?  
Was it just for himself alone?

Then he reared, by his subdued bit of earth,  
A hut, with a roof of straw;  
And he threw his jungle freedom down  
And bound himself with law!  
The law of vigils; the law of toil;  
The law of a garnered store;  
The law of the hut, with himself to stand  
In the breech, as a living door.  
The law, with no clergy benefit;  
The law of the track and pace;  
The law that makes him one woman's pawn,  
But allows her child his place!  
The law that grinds him as grist between  
The upper and nether stone—  
Why did he barter his gold for dross?  
Was it just for himself alone?

What profit is bounderies unto man?  
This old world still is wide—  
But he ever has stablished them, with his blood,  
For the woman by his side.

And she, in her thrice walled capital,  
Dishevelled and bathed in tears,  
Has borrowed the Captives witless taunt  
And dins it into his ears!  
"Unfeeling! heartless! tyrant!" he hears;  
As he changes his wheat for chaff  
And smiles to hide the robbery;  
Or masks a groan with a laugh!  
If tyrant he be; with a tyrant's tears  
Have the fields of the world been sown—  
And what of the goal of his tyranny?  
Is it one for himself, alone?

---

### Song of the Pirate.

I am the Pirate, with none to thank  
For the place I hold; let 'em walk the plank  
Who dare resist when my flag's unfurled  
To the craven gaze of a cringing world.  
My keel of oak, that parts the blue,  
Was hewn where the Constitution grew.  
I set my course where the strange sea streams  
Run full of the tears of vanished dreams.  
And the gulls that fly beyond my ken  
Are the hope-drawn souls of my fellow men.

I am the Pirate; my grappling hooks  
Are formed of the reasoning found in books;  
And my boarding pike and my keen cutlass  
Of the fool's desire for a ruling class;  
My sails are formed of an ermine robe,  
And my treasure cave is the whole round globe.  
The wind by which my sails are bent  
Is blind regard for a precedent.  
My augur for greater spoil ahead  
Is the words of men who have long been dead.

I am the Pirate; God help the wight  
Who seeks his safety in arms, or flight.  
For his feeble arms, when matched with mine,  
Are as night to day; as mist to wine;  
What matters to me if he turn and fly?  
In every harbor my consorts lie;  
And there are no winds on the wild sea trail  
Save those that speed a friendly sail.  
I am the Pirate; my robber's den  
Is paved and walled with the skulls of men.

### An Oath.

By the code by which the angels hold;  
By the faith the fathers held;  
By the power of love, or sword, or gold;  
By the strength of a fate, compelled;  
By the urge that riots the worlds between;  
By the promise of Holy Writ—  
I had rather be lowbrowed, dense and mean  
Than a polished hypocrite.

By the brethren of the Central Sun;  
By the world's they hold in pawn:  
By the lawless paths, where the comets run;  
By the fount whence power is drawn;  
By great Orion's loosened bands;  
By the cluster which charts the seas—  
I had rather want, in barren lands,  
Than callous an hypocrit's knees.

By the sword of the Angel of Recompense;  
By the Ark of the souls of men;  
By all things now and all things hence;  
By all things which have been;  
By the Mace of the Marshall of the thrones  
Where Justice and Mercy sit—  
I had rather be soulless as the stones,  
Than endowed—and an hypocrit.

---

### My Country—I Would Sing.

Oh, my country, proud and boastful;  
Land where seers are crucified;  
With your by-ways lined with lunkheads  
And your highways paved with pride;  
I would sing of you, so raucous  
That the fiends would be content;  
If I only knew a measure  
That would fit the "Copper Cent!"

Oh, my country; widely touted  
As the Pilgrim's legacy—  
Fancied by the Chump and Chumpess:  
"Fair land of the brave and free!"  
I would sing loud of thy freedom;  
If I knew just how, and where,  
I could find it—mayhap track it  
To its ego ermined lair.

Oh, my country; fattening pasture  
For pirate and hypocrit;  
And an early frost for wisdom,  
And a parching drought for wit;  
I would sing of thy green pastures,  
Roamed by Covin and her foal;  
If desire were strong within me  
To assissinate my soul!

Oh, my country; wed to Mammon,  
That you might acquire a name;  
Glorying in your prostitution;  
Heralding afar your shame;  
I would sing of you 'till echoes  
Bounded back from heaven's wall;  
If this were the only living—  
If I knew death ended all.

---

### To the Fighting Man.

A pean to the fighting man; God bless his potent arm;  
He wields the sword in virtue's cause, he shields the  
weak from harm.  
Hosannas raise, through darksome days, unto the man  
who dares  
To battle wrong, though it be strong—e'en on the altar  
stairs.

A garland for the fighting man; though non-combatants  
jeer;  
He hears and heeds the far off sounds, echoes of what is  
near,  
And hearing these, on every breeze, he recks not of the  
cost  
As reckoned by the bloodless fry—if honor be not lost.

All honor to the valiant soul, unto the fighting man,  
Who bravely dares, in these dull times, to stretch to  
Nature's plan;  
Who, while alert, leaves his desert unto the Great Assize  
Which shall convene, sometime, between the two eterni-  
ties.

God bless the noble fighting man—God be with him al-  
way—  
His is the burden of the hour; the welfare of the day.  
Unto is hand, in every land, is given reckoning;  
And whatso'er betide us here the fighting man is King.

God grant that when the fight is o'er and we shall journey  
hence  
To claim our due, whate'er it be, by law of recompense,  
That men may say, in that last day, as they each record  
scan  
"Give him his meed, he was indeed a man—a fighting  
man."

---

### Peace—Peace—Peace.

"Peace, peace, peace," I hear you crying;  
'Till the sound fills earth and sky;  
And I wonder, wonder, wonder  
What it is you mean thereby.  
Your conventions reek complaisance  
At the havoc of your hands—  
Itching palms, grown talon fingered  
For the throats of weaker lands!

"Peace," the sound itself is tainted  
And the reason for the cry  
Is that profit's source has shifted—  
Not concern for those who die!  
Millions have gone down, untimely,  
Ever since the dollar reigned,  
Just as useless, and with lesser  
Glory than in war is gained.

When the clod falls on the coffin  
Of the toiler, commerce slain,  
Does his widow feel less anguish,  
Or his orphan milder pain;  
Than the widow, or the orphan,  
Of the one who, valiantly,  
Took the long trail to the sunset  
From a sulphurous canopy?

Watch the army your stern bugles  
Call to suffer and endure—  
It is going to the slaughter  
Just as swiftly; just as sure!  
Oh, you cowards! base and bloodless!  
Who, like chastened puppies, whine  
For free let to wage your carnage  
In the factory—in the mine!

What is war and what is carnage?  
Bah! you hypocrites and dense—  
You who wage it on your pavements;  
Wage it neath a false pretense;  
You have, ruthless, mired your betters  
In a softened muscle's slough;  
Through you womanhood has fainted  
As at no time hitherto.

Oh, the mockery of your mouthings—  
Oh, the hollowness; the vain,  
Vaporous, vaucous, vaunting frothings;  
Which you use, as cloaks for gain—  
Use to lure the life raped toiler  
Into trading brain and brawn  
For your brazen whistles blowing  
Raucous insults at each dawn.

---

### The White Man's Law.

The white man's law is: auto-praise;  
Its sanction, the blunder whereby he lays  
The flattering unction to his soul  
That his ways are God's and heaven his goal;  
That the unctions groan, and the pious roll  
Of eyes to'ard heaven; his thrice grudged dole;  
The price of its winning pays.

The white man's law is an unrhymed dirge,  
That rolls o'er his own, in surge on surge,  
When forth it widens; but to find  
The broken meats, where another dined.  
It is not the power of brain, of mind,  
But the power of his fashionings lies behind  
His boast of, "Cosmic Urge."

The white man's law is a law of tears;  
Of red days, weaving marauding years;  
Of worship of stick, of staff, of stone;  
Of grotesque fashionings of his own;  
Of the farthing, unto the guinea grown;  
Through the widow's cry—the orphan's moan;  
Through his gods, with their phantom fears.

The white man's law is the printed word;  
With no root in, nor has it stirred,

E'en his own heart; nor met one need,  
Save police the way that his sateless greed  
May not be hampered, nor slow of speed;  
As it hell-ward roars, for it's Master's meed—  
For the crown to be conferred.

The white man's law is a rule of flaws;  
Entrenched in talons, and beaks, and claws—  
In ruthless claw and talon and beak,  
For the tawney tribes—for the so-called weak;  
But, doubtless, strong, if perchance you seek  
For strength within and not in the sleek  
Vestments of a covined cause.

The white man's law is a law of snares;  
From his fraud dyed marts to his altar stairs;  
From his fancy's children to work of hands;  
From his untamed wastes to his slave tilled lands;  
From his plighted troth to it's broken bands;  
From its incoherent, vain commands  
(Which he neither heeds nor understands)  
To the blasphemy of his prayers.

---

### Millweary.

I'm weary of returning naught;  
Soul weary of the stress,  
And if this be a coward's thought  
'Tis manly to confess.

All of the tinsel joys of sense  
We jubilantly grasp,  
Have at the last the recompense  
Found with a bosomed Asp.

Despite Life's fleeting, febrile spawn  
Of visions roseate;  
At noonday, sunset, midnight, dawn,  
We cast the dice with Fate.

The world-old question still remains  
Unanswered, as of yore,  
And in the castle of our pains  
No casement is, nor door.

Amid the utter weariness  
Of printed page on page  
Man's soul grasps hungering, in duress,  
As in the elder age.

We war for who will pay the price,  
In fruit of blood-hewn mines,  
And flags stained with a damned device  
Go fluttering down our lines.

One faints beside the camel's girth—  
Another takes his place—  
This is the legacy of earth;  
The urge-fruit of the race.

Wherefore I'm weary of the stress  
With all its wealth of naught  
And hold it manly to confess—  
Whate'er you brand the thought.

---

### Question.

Whence came it—the idea of hell—  
A rubbish heap, unsituate?  
For its cause must have been, as well  
As good cause to perpetuate.

### The Answer.

The gain-mad masters of the leas;  
The gold-crazed captains of the town—  
Who would with lights fit honey bees;  
So they could labor, post sun-down—

Myopic imbeciles who curse  
The world by assumed guardianship;  
Who, like a miser, guard their purse;  
But shower charity of lip—

The neo-pagons, who attempt  
To take the fables from mankind—  
Not that they may leave them exempt;  
But may their own upon them bind—

The academic owls who pose  
As vicars of the Absolute;

With power to open and to close;  
Usurping His prime attribute—

The stupid, stolid, pulseless clan,  
Whom Learning, from her dust cloth, shook;  
Who never see sun, earth, nor man;  
Save through the dimmed glass of a book—

The slaves who, willing, wear the chains  
Of speech, or habit, who aspire  
To nothing higher than the pains  
Of a majority desire—

These are the scourge; for which there came  
The Prophet-sons of Deity  
And rolled the idea in the name;  
“Gehenna”—or like euphony.

---

### Don't.

Don't take this life too seriously,  
It really does not pay.  
We're here for such a little while,  
Then out and far away.  
What yesterday we coveted,  
And deemed was learning wide,  
Today is useless theory—  
Discarded, thrown aside.  
And what today we think has worth,  
Sufficient to repeat,  
Tomorrow we will romp upon—  
And do this with both feet.

Mohammed was a serious chap  
And wore a sober brow,  
Habitually, but I would ask;  
Where is Mohammed now?  
The lowest camel driver who  
Loafed, loved and drank and sang,  
Until the dim Arabian vales  
With raucous echoes rang,  
Is, mayhap, as well off as he  
And in the day of pain  
May have much less to answer for  
And hence much more to gain.

Just rampse around through history—  
And legendary days—  
And you'll conclude the serious folk  
Were earth's profoundest jays  
Take all the great philosophers  
Who lolled in learning's lap,  
And every warrior, small and great,  
Who ever changed the map;  
And every king and potentate;  
And every Gallahad;  
And you'll discover seriousness  
Is somewhat to the bad.

The scrap across the water, which  
Is making sundry ghosts,  
Comes from the serious carrying out  
Of several serious boasts,  
Things over there had progressed so  
A laugh was out of style—  
One man got so he couldn't say:  
"Me undt mein Gott"—and smile.  
And so he cut his navy loose;  
His army mobilized;  
And for his stupid seriousness,  
Europe is blood baptizèd.

So don't take life too seriously—  
It really does not pay—  
And then, besides; it is the seed  
Of trouble anyway.  
True, purposeless frivolity  
Brings regrets in its wake;  
But even it, ne'er started wars  
Nor burned folks at the stake.  
If you must choose between the two  
Pass up the serious side—  
Remember that the serious folks  
Died as the frivolous died.



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